"Corporate"

Some surprising (maybe astounding) things today's Americans say about the arts.

Times are tough. Non-essentials must go. Therefore, we have to cut back on support for the arts, right?

Wrong.

That's *not* what today's Americans are saying. The arts, they say, *are* essential. They want more of them, not less. And they're willing to increase their taxes to pay for them.

These are some of the surprising findings of a recent Louis Harris survey* on "Americans and the Arts" which we are proud to have sponsored with the National Endowment for the Arts, on behalf of the American Council for the Arts.

We cite them because they may be more than surprising—astounding, perhaps—to those who grew up in a world where the arts were perceived to be the plaything of the affluent, one leisure activity of those with lots of leisure time.

That was perilously close to the case when we took our first benchmark study of the arts in 1973. In that year, Americans rejected by only the slimmest of margins—48 to 46—the traditional notion that the arts were for "a privileged few."

The situation today is dramatically different. Although leisure time has shrunk since '73, and although Americans have cut back their leisure activities in many areas including sports and movies, they have actually increased the time they spend with the arts. And today's Americans decisively reject—59 to 39—the claim that the arts are for "a privileged few."

Perhaps more important, at least to those who must set government policy toward the arts, is the fact that the same decisive majority—59 to 39—would support a modest $15 increase in their federal income taxes to aid the arts. (An overwhelming 70% would support an increase of $5.) The present federal aid to the arts, by way of comparison, is just 70¢ per capita.

This seems to us the same practical level-headed thinking we find in every survey of the American people. It is not *despite* the fact that times are tough, but *because* of it, that Americans want to increase their support of the arts. They have discovered what those who are surprised at these findings may have forgotten: that the arts are "a positive experience in a troubled world" and provide "an uplift from everyday experiences"—propositions endorsed by 75% of today's Americans.

We know that anyone interested in the arts will find considerable "uplift" in these findings, and we are happy to share them. If you would like a summary of the survey write George Weissman, Chairman of the Board, Philip Morris Incorporated, 100 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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*Conducted by the National Research Center for the Arts, Inc. an affiliate of Louis Harris & Associates, Inc.

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